



**Testimony of
MAC
Manufacturing Alliance of Connecticut, Inc.
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Senator Lebeau, Representative Perone, members of the Commerce Committee...

Good day. My name is Frank Johnson and I am the president of MAC, the Manufacturing Alliance of Connecticut. I am here today to thank you for hearing these bills. The manufacturing community is working more closely than ever to make this a great session for manufacturers because we believe, as do most of you, that manufacturing remains the heartbeat of the Connecticut economy.

In particular, I want to call attention to legislation that we support that would:

- Extend the **JET** (Job Expansion Tax Credit) program,
- Continue the **STEP-UP** program,
- Modify the **MRA** (Manufacturing reinvestment Act), and
- Fund the **Connecticut Manufacturing Innovation Fund**.

In addition, the manufacturing community is very interested in allowing 'S' corporations and pass-through entities the ability to utilize the Manufacturing Apprenticeship Tax Credit. In our most recent survey, 13% of respondents indicated that they are using the apprenticeship credit.

We also believe that the **Connecticut Manufacturing Innovation Fund** will aide and encourage Connecticut's manufacturing companies to make the strategic investments that keep them globally competitive and more importantly; will help them grow and remain in our state. As you know, the fund is designed to:

- Help manufacturers innovate and expand,
- Support public/private training initiatives and to hopefully, and to
- Leverage federal grant funds to support manufacturing in our state and in the region.

As our workforce ages it is imperative that we support the growth, innovation and training necessary to backfill our trained workforce.

The Connecticut General Assembly has been pro-active in providing funding and direction to the manufacturing workforce in our state and continues to invest millions of dollars each year in workforce development programs. Yet most manufacturers cannot fill critical shop floor positions.

Connecticut manufacturing needs a strong technical workforce. Manufacturers rely on the right workers with the right skills at the right time to drive innovation, increase productivity and remain globally competitive.

Workforce development is needed to give workers the critical skills necessary to access employment and advancement opportunities.

- We recommend that Connecticut conduct a far-reaching and extremely job-specific survey of all Connecticut manufacturers to determine current, mid-term and long term skilled employee training needs.
- With the survey results in hand we can better determine the specific training needs of the manufacturing community and then devise programs and career paths for entry level and incumbent workers to fill these positions.

Finally, I want to thank the chairs, vice-chairs and members of the Commerce Committee for their support and cooperation. And I wish to extend a special thanks to Senator LeBeau for all of his hard work, patience and understanding through the years. He will be missed as chair of this committee but his legacy, the Manufacturing Caucus will continue long into the future.

Thank you.